



TO THE MEMBERS OF FIFA

Circular no. 1262

Zurich, 12 May 2011

SG/ft-est

Amendments to the Laws of the Game – 2011/2012

Dear Sir or Madam,

The 125th Annual General Meeting of the International Football Association Board (IFAB) took place in Wales on 5 March 2011. The amendments to the Laws of the Game approved at this meeting and the various instructions and directives issued are listed below.

Amendments to the Laws of the Game and decisions of the Board

1. Law 1 – The Field of Play

(Submitted by FIFA)

a) Interpretation of the Laws of the Game and Guidelines for Referees – Field markings

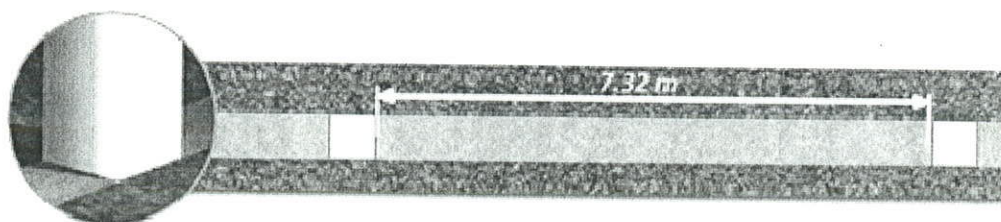
Present text	New text
Only the lines indicated in Law 1 are to be marked on the field of play.	Only the lines indicated in Law 1 are to be marked on the field of play. Where artificial surfaces are used, other lines are permitted provided that they are of a different colour and clearly distinguishable from the lines used for football.

Reason

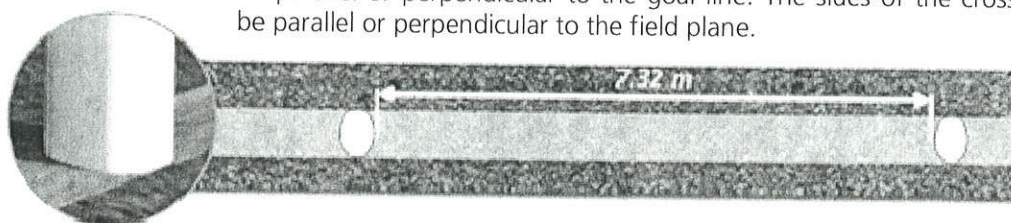
There is clearly a demand for football turf pitches to have markings for more sports than just football. Considering that these lines cannot be removed from a football turf pitch, it is problematic under the current Laws of the Game to find a basis for allowing a competitive football match to take place on a football turf pitch that is used for multiple sports.

b) Goals

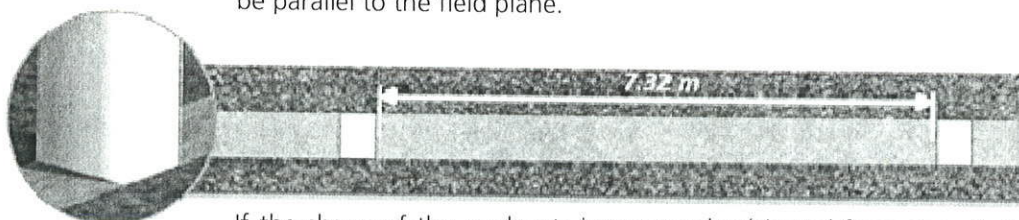
Present text	New text
	The position of the goalposts in relation to the goal line must be according to the graphics below.



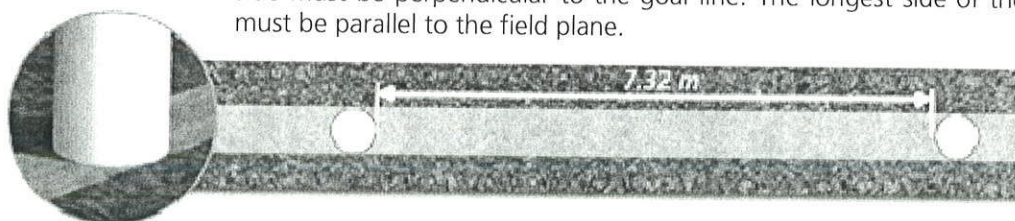
If the shape of the goalposts is square (viewed from above), the sides must be parallel or perpendicular to the goal line. The sides of the crossbar must be parallel or perpendicular to the field plane.



If the shape of the goalposts is elliptical (viewed from above), the longest axis must be perpendicular to the goal line. The longest axis of the crossbar must be parallel to the field plane.



If the shape of the goalposts is rectangular (viewed from above), the longest side must be perpendicular to the goal line. The longest side of the crossbar must be parallel to the field plane.



Reason

It is necessary to define the position of the goalposts in relation to the goal line in order to avoid inconsistencies between one field of play and another.

2. Law 2 – The Ball
(Submitted by FIFA)

Replacement of a defective ball

Present text	New text
<p>If the ball bursts or becomes defective during the course of a match:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • the match is stopped • the match is restarted by dropping the replacement ball at the place where the original ball became defective, unless play was stopped inside the goal area, in which case the referee drops the replacement ball on the goal area line parallel to the goal line at the point nearest to where the original ball was located when play was stopped 	<p>If the ball bursts or becomes defective during the course of a match:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • the match is stopped • the match is restarted by dropping the replacement ball at the place where the original ball became defective, unless play was stopped inside the goal area, in which case the referee drops the replacement ball on the goal area line parallel to the goal line at the point nearest to where the original ball was located when play was stopped <p>If the ball bursts or becomes defective during a penalty kick or during kicks from the penalty mark as it moves forward and before it touches any player or the crossbar or goalposts:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • the penalty kick is retaken

Reason

It is considered unfair that if the ball bursts or becomes defective during a penalty kick or during kicks from the penalty mark, play is restarted with a dropped ball in accordance with the present text of Law 2.

3. Law 3 – The Number of Players

(Submitted by FIFA)

a) Structural amendment

Present structure	New structure
<p>Law 3</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Players • Official competitions • Other matches • All matches • Substitution procedure • Changing the goalkeeper • Infringements and sanctions • Players and substitutes sent off 	<p>Law 3</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Number of players • Number of substitutions <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Official competitions - Other matches • Substitution procedure • Changing the goalkeeper • Infringements and sanctions • Players and substitutes sent off

Reason

The text of Law 3 has been reorganised by the IFAB Technical Sub-Committee in order to have a clearer structure of the Laws and to avoid current misinterpretations.

b) Addition to the current text of the Interpretation of the Laws of the Game and Guidelines for Referees – Extra persons on the field of play

Present text	New text
<p>Extra persons on the field of play Outside agents Anyone not indicated on the team list as a player, substitute or team official is deemed to be an outside agent, as is a player who has been sent off.</p> <p>Team officials If a team official enters the field of play: ...</p>	<p>Extra persons on the field of play Outside agents Anyone not indicated on the team list as a player, substitute or team official is deemed to be an outside agent, as is a player who has been sent off.</p> <p>Team officials The coach and other officials indicated on the team list (with the exception of players or substitutes) are deemed to be team officials. If a team official enters the field of play: ...</p>

Reason

There are some references to team officials in the Laws of the Game but no definition of the term. The reorganisation of the text of Law 3 is a good opportunity to include a definition of team officials for ease of understanding.

4. Law 4 – The Players’ Equipment

(Submitted by the Football Association of Wales)

Basic equipment

Present text	New text
shorts – if undershorts are worn, they must be of the same main colour as the shorts	shorts – if undershorts or tights are worn, they must be of the same main colour as the shorts

Reason

The current Law permits tights to be worn that are not of the same basic colour as the shorts, which could possibly result in confusion for opponents and match officials. This change would ensure consistency with the present wording that requires undershorts, if worn, to be of the same basic colour as the shorts and prevent the aforementioned confusion.

5. Law 5 – The Referee

(Submitted by FIFA)

Interpretation of the Laws of the Game and Guidelines for Referees – Powers and Duties

Present text	New text
	<p>If an extra ball, other object or animal enters the field of play during the match, the referee must stop the match only if it interferes with play. Play must be restarted by a dropped ball from the position of the match ball when play was stopped, unless play was stopped inside the goal area, in which case the referee drops the ball on the goal area line parallel to the goal line at the point nearest to where the ball was located when play was stopped.</p> <p>If an extra ball, other object or animal enters the field of play during the match without interfering with play, the referee must have it removed at the earliest possible opportunity.</p>

Reason

It is unclear in the current text of the Laws of the Game which decision the referee should take when an object enters the pitch and interferes with play, and which decision the referee should take when an object enters the pitch without interfering with play.

As this amendment was approved, the paragraph below has been deleted:

Law 2 – The Ball

Interpretation of the Laws of the Game and Guidelines for Referees – Extra balls on the field of play

Present text	New text
<p>If an extra ball enters the field of play during the match, the referee must stop the match only if it interferes with play. Play must be restarted by a dropped ball from the position of the ball when the match was stopped, unless play was stopped inside the goal area, in which case the referee drops the ball on the goal area line parallel to the goal line at the point nearest to where the ball was located when play was stopped.</p> <p>If an extra ball enters the field of play during the match without interfering with play, the referee must have it removed at the earliest possible opportunity.</p>	

6. Law 8 – The Start and Restart of Play

(Submitted by FIFA)

a) Structural amendment

Present structure	New structure
<p>Law 8</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Preliminaries • Kick-off • Procedure • Infringements and sanctions • Dropped ball • Procedure • Infringements and sanctions 	<p>Law 8</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Definition of kick-off • Procedure <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Before a kick-off at the start of the match or extra time - Kick-off • Infringements and sanctions • Definition of dropped ball • Procedure • Infringements and sanctions

Reason

A new organisation of the text of Law 8 has been prepared by the IFAB Technical Sub-Committee in order to have a more clear structure of the Laws and avoid current misinterpretations.

b) Addition to the current text

Present text	New text
<p>Dropped ball</p> <p>If, while the ball is still in play, the referee is required to stop play temporarily for any reason not mentioned elsewhere in the Laws of the Game, the match is restarted with a dropped ball.</p>	<p>Definition of dropped ball</p> <p>A dropped ball is a method of restarting play when, while the ball is still in play, the referee is required to stop play temporarily for any reason not mentioned elsewhere in the Laws of the Game.</p>

Reason

Following the general structure of the Laws of the Game of definition, procedure and infringements, it is considered necessary to include a definition of a dropped ball.

Other decisions of the IFAB**1. Additional Assistant Referees (AARs)****a) Experiment status**

The proposal to move the AAR's position from left to right and to allow the referee to return to his "traditional" diagonal system should be approved, provided that any such change does not commence until the start of a new season (e.g. 2011/2012 in Europe).

The AAR experiment will be permitted to continue until its planned conclusion, following which the IFAB will make a final decision.

b) Use of Additional Assistant Referees at UEFA EURO 2012

The IFAB unanimously agreed to grant UEFA permission to use AARs at the EURO 2012 final tournament.

2. Goal-line technology (GLT)

The IFAB has agreed to the continuation of the GLT project. A final decision on GLT should be made during the IFAB Special Meeting, which will be convened following the conclusion of UEFA EURO 2012.

3. Law 4 – The Players' Equipment**a) Other equipment: usage of radio communication**

The IFAB agreed that this item should be referred to the FIFA Task Force Football 2014 for consideration.

b) Other equipment: wearing of "snoods"

The IFAB determined that items such as "snoods" and other similar clothing did not meet the definition of "other equipment" under Law 4 and was therefore not permitted.

4. Law 12 – Fouls and Misconduct**Sending-off offences**

The IFAB agreed that the matter should be referred to the FIFA Task Force Football 2014 for consideration.

5. Vanishing spray

The IFAB approved the use of vanishing spray by CONMEBOL on a trial basis.

Implementation

The decisions of this year's Annual General Meeting of the Board regarding changes to the Laws of the Game are binding for confederations and member associations as from 1 July 2011 but confederations or member associations whose current season has not ended by 1 July may delay the introduction of the adopted alterations to the Laws of the Game in their competitions until the beginning of their next season.

Yours faithfully,

FÉDÉRATION INTERNATIONALE
DE FOOTBALL ASSOCIATION



Jérôme Valcke
Secretary General

cc: FIFA Executive Committee
FIFA Referees Committee
Confederations